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THEATER SERVICE FORCES  
EUROPEAN THEATER

Office of the Theater Chief Surgeon  
(Main), APO 757

Ch Surg 322

6 October 1945.

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 71

Theater Medical Laboratory - - - - - Section I.  
Amendment to Current Directive - - - - - Section II.

SECTION I. THEATER MEDICAL LABORATORY.

1. The following Circular Letters, Off Ch Surg, are rescinded:

- a. No. 163, "Services provided by First Medical General Laboratory", 10 November 1943.
- b. No. 164, "Packing of Laboratory Specimens", 16 November 1943.
- c. No. 86 (Supply No. 19), "Diagnostic Biologicals", 23 June 1944.
- d. Section I, No. 31, "Laboratory Service", 2 April 1945.

2. The Fourth Medical Laboratory, APO 887, US Army, located in the Ecole de Pharmacie, No. 4, Avenue De la Observatoire, Paris, is designated as the Theater Laboratory and will provide specialized laboratory services, facilities, and consultations to all units in the European Theater. These services will include:

- a. Laboratory service for units not otherwise served.
- b. Assistance to other laboratories in the performance of examinations beyond their resources or in emergencies.
- c. Necessary laboratory investigation on all matters pertaining to the health of the armed forces in the European Theater.
- d. Consultation service for laboratory diagnostic problems.
- e. Operating a histo-pathologic center for the European Theater.
- f. Acting as the distribution agency for biological items of the 17000 series and the antigens for the serologic tests for syphilis.

3. Submission of Specimens to Theater Laboratory.

- a. General. Specimens submitted will be adequately packed to prevent damage or leakage during transit. Cotton plugs or waxed paper caps are not suitable for stoppers. Specimens will be accompanied by the appropriate Medical Department Form (Med Dept Series 55-L) executed in duplicate, wrapped around speci-

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men container and secured with a rubber band or string. These forms will provide the following information in legible form:

- (1) Designation and APO of unit submitting specimen.
- (2) Date of collection of specimen.
- (3) Name, rank, organization, and serial number of patient.
- (4) Nature of specimen.
- (5) Specific type of examination desired.
- (6) All other pertinent data.

Forms accompanying spinal fluid specimens will be submitted in triplicate if more than a Wassermann test is desired.

b. BACTERIOLOGY. Facilities are available for the performance of definitive bacteriological procedures of a nature beyond the scope of other medical installations. The following will govern the submission of material for bacteriological study:

- (1) To prevent breakage and contamination, organisms submitted for confirmation or determination of type will be planted on fresh agar slants rather than plates.
  - (a) Slants should be retained by the submitting unit only long enough to be sure that growth is progressing, then transmitted to the Theater Laboratory by the most expeditious means.
  - (b) Slants prepared in small, round, screw-cap vials (9cc) (Medical Supply Item #4056200) are ideal.
- (2) Stool specimens must be submitted immediately after being obtained and are best transported with buffered glycerin or 1% sodium citrate solution preservative. Units located in the metropolitan area of Paris and utilizing courier service need not use preservatives.
- (3) Fluid specimens must be adequately stoppered to prevent leakage and contamination.
- (4) Water samples must be transmitted as soon as possible after being taken. Water bottles containing sodium thiosulphate will be supplied with mailing cases by the Theater Laboratory on request. The residual chlorine content must be determined at the time the sample is obtained and recorded on the accompanying triplicate ETO Form 325.



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c. PATHOLOGY. The Army Institute of Pathology, Army Medical Museum, requires that all autopsies (except those performed on foreign civilians) all tumors, all lymph nodes, all skin lesions, and any other specimens considered to be of interest be submitted to the Theater Laboratory for review and transmission of suitable material to the Army Medical Museum. All autopsy or surgical material submitted will include autopsy protocols or forms 55-M in the same package to prevent delay and unnecessary correspondence in bringing forms and material together. The following will govern the submission of various types of material for study:

- (1) AUTOPSY MATERIAL. To be of value, such material must be submitted in a complete form and will always include:
  - (a) A complete autopsy protocol in triplicate which will include the following:
    - (1) Designation and APO of the unit submitting material.
    - (2) Name, rank, serial number, age, status, and organization of deceased.
    - (3) Date and place of death.
    - (4) Date and place of autopsy.
    - (5) Adequate extract of clinical record (in cases of traumatic death, the time, place, and nature of the accident will be included).
    - (6) Gross and microscopic description of tissues examined.
    - (7) Toxicological report when appropriate.
    - (8) In medico-legal cases a statement as to whether case should be coded as suicide or homicide.
  - (b) Representative portions of wet tissue from all organs examined grossly, this wet tissue to be fixed in 10 times their own volume of 10% formalin prepared by diluting one part commercial formalin (Medical Supply Item #1205000) with 10 parts of tap water.
  - (c) Units having histo-pathological facilities will include:
    - (1) A duplicate set of stained sections.
    - (2) All paraffin blocks concerning the case.
- (2) SURGICAL AND BIOPSY MATERIAL. The following will govern submission of all tumors, skin lesions, lymph nodes, enucleated eyes, and material from other unusual cases to the Theater Laboratory.



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- (a) Medical Department Form 55-M will be executed in triplicate and submitted with each specimen. The upper half of this form will be completed in all cases, and the lower half when histo-pathological facilities are available to the submitting units. The triplicate copy will be returned with the gross and microscopic description and diagnosis made by the Theater Laboratory.
- (b) When histo-pathological facilities are available to the unit, all paraffin blocks and duplicate sets of stained sections will be submitted. When the entire specimen is imbedded in paraffin, a notation to that effect will be made in the gross description.
- (c) Wet tissue will be fixed in 10% formalin as described under par 3c (1) (b) above.
- (d) The Theater Laboratory will furnish duplicate stained slides to the submitting unit in interesting cases upon request.

- (3) GROSS SPECIMENS. The Army Medical Museum is interested in receiving fixed gross specimens of unusual pathologic lesions. These will be transmitted with the least possible distortion to the Theater Laboratory either with the entire autopsy material or separately, accompanied in all cases by a copy of the autopsy protocol or Form 55-M, whichever is appropriate. If Kaiserling's solution is available, it will be used for fixation. Otherwise formalin fixation will suffice.

d. SEROLOGY. Whole blood specimens in transit for several days or transported a considerable distance are frequently hemolyzed and unsuitable for serologic tests. For this reason, serum only will be shipped by units located at distances necessitating more than 24 hours in transit.

- (1) Merthiolate tubes will be forwarded by the Theater Laboratory upon request for the submission of blood or spinal fluid from distances requiring longer than 24 hours to negotiate. These tubes will not be used by units operating in the metropolitan area of Paris and employing courier service.

e. CHEMISTRY. Specimens for chemical analysis and determination will be submitted in accordance with AR 40-310. The precautions listed below must be observed:

- (1) Toxicological specimens should be accompanied by a copy of the gross autopsy protocol or a complete clinical history of the case. Sufficient quantities of material must be submitted in adequately sealed, chemically clean bottles, preferably with no preservative other than refrigeration.



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(a) When a preservative is necessary, the following steps will govern:

- (1) Absolute ethyl alcohol will be used as a preservative whenever possible.
- (2) Information must be furnished as to the type and concentration of the preservative used.
- (3) A separate sample of the preservative must be submitted with the specimen.
- (4) Formaldehyde should be used as a preservative only in case of heavy metal poisoning.

- (2) Blood specimens for alcohol determination must be submitted as soon as possible after the sample is taken. Special courier service should be used in these cases whenever possible.
- (3) Chemical analysis of beverages will be made provided adequate samples are submitted for the purpose. In examination of specimens obtained in case lots or larger, specimens from 2 bottles picked at random from each case should be submitted so that a representative sample is obtained.

f. VETERINARY. Facilities are available for the chemical and bacteriological examination of foods for compliance with the US Army specifications, evidence of spoilage, and fitness for human consumption. In addition, laboratory work necessary for the diagnoses of disease in animals, and those procedures requiring animal inoculation will be performed upon request when sufficient laboratory animals are available.

- (1) Materials submitted for animal inoculation should be transmitted in sterile containers when possible. They should always be transmitted by the most expeditious means without preservatives being added. (This includes urine for Friedman or Aschoim-Zondek tests.)
- (2) Dogs suspected of having rabies and/or biting military personnel should be tied or confined in a safe place for a period of 15 days for observation. Under no circumstances should the animal be killed upon having symptoms of "fits" or other signs of disease without consulting a medical or veterinary officer. If the animal is to be destroyed, it must never be shot through the head. The entire head will be submitted to the Theater Laboratory packed in ice. If the brain is removed, it should be divided longitudinally with one half being submitted in pure, undiluted glycerine and the other in 10% formalin.
- (3) Veterinary officers submitting samples of food for analysis will execute in triplicate form shown in Annex 1.

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- (4) When food suspected of producing an outbreak of food poisoning is submitted, a list of all foods consumed for the past two meals and a complete history of the outbreak including numbers involved, symptomatology, time of outbreak following the last meal, and all other pertinent data are required, along with samples of food consumed in their original or other clean containers. If the latter are used, the manufacturer and the code number of the food should be submitted. No preservatives will be used.

g. SUPPLY OF BIOLOGICAL PREPARATIONS. Biological preparations included in the 17000 series and antigens for the serologic tests for syphilis will be supplied to medical installations by the Theater Laboratory. The following will govern:

- (1) Requisitions will be submitted through regular medical supply channels and routed to the Theater Laboratory for filling.
- (2) Requisitions including items not belonging to the category listed above or which the Laboratory cannot furnish, will be filled insofar as possible by the Laboratory, then rerouted to the appropriate medical supply depot, where the balance will be filled.
- (3) Biologicals will be requisitioned at frequent intervals and only in necessary quantities. (Since these items are perishable, it is not practical to stock large quantities at any time.)
- (4) Requisitions will be filled the same day as received and will be dispatched by the most practical expeditious means.

4. Other Medical Laboratories and General Hospital Laboratories will furnish laboratory service to units having no facilities and which are located sufficiently near to make such service practical.

## SECTION II. AMENDMENT TO CURRENT DIRECTIVE.

1. Paragraph 1, Section I, Circular Letter No. 67, Off T Ch Surg, "Recurring Reports", 22 September 1945, is amended by the deletion of:

Sanitary Report

WD-71

AR 40-275, amended by Change  
1, 25 Jan 45.

2. Section I, Circular Letter No. 67, Off T Ch Surg, "Recurring Reports", 22 September 1945, is further amended by the addition of the following paragraph:



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3. Report listed below will be forwarded through command channels to the Commanding General, Hq, Theater Service Forces, European Theater (Main), APO 757:

REPORT TITLE

APPROVAL SYMBOL OR  
REGISTRY NUMBER

REQUIRING DIRECTIVE

Monthly Sanitary Report and  
Venereal Disease Supplement

WD-71

AR 40-275, amended by Change  
1, 25 Jan 45 and Cir Ltr 20,  
Off Ch Surg, 2 Feb 44.

By order of the Theater Chief Surgeon:

*F H Mowrey*

F. H. MOWREY,  
Colonel, Medical Corps,  
Executive Officer.

1 Incl: Annex 1.

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Circular Letter No. 70, Off T Ch Surg, "Evacuation of Patients to the United States", 2 October 1945, was distributed to: Surgeons, All Major Commands; Commanding Officers, All Hospitals, only.

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APC # \_\_\_\_\_.

Date \_\_\_\_\_.

SUBJECT: Request for Examination of \_\_\_\_\_.

TO : Commanding Officer, Fourth Medical Laboratory, APC 887.

1. Samples of the following products have been forwarded for laboratory examination:

NAME OF PRODUCT	PKG. CODE	B.A.I. EST	NET CONT. (PDS)	NO. OF SAMPLES SUBM.	AMOUNT INVOLVED	CONTRACT NO.	REQ. OR P.O. NO.	CONTRACTORS NAME & ADDRESS

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Data regarding packing, handling, storage, etc.

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Examination desired.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

ANNEX 1.

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